

For immediate release
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COMMISSION MOVES FORWARD ON SAN DIEGO-TIJUANA SANITATION PROJECT, AUTHORIZES RFQ FOR DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND OPERATION

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (IBWC) has authorized the release of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for design, construction, and operation of a proposed international secondary wastewater treatment project along the San Diego, CA-Tijuana, BC border. The action comes under authority of Minute 311, a 2004 agreement of the IBWC, which establishes a framework for the siting of a wastewater treatment facility in Mexico.

The action by the Commission affirms agreement to go forward on plans to benefit people in the San Diego-Tijuana area through increased capacity to treat sewage to a higher standard.

The RFQ solicitation is being issued by Bajagua, LLC, with the approval of the IBWC. This company has been selected as the consultant of the U.S. Section of the Commission (USIBWC) to develop the project. Currently, the Commission provides advanced primary treatment of 25 million gallons per day (mgd) of wastewater from Tijuana at its existing South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) in San Diego. Under the selected alternative of the Minute 311 project, a new 59 mgd wastewater treatment plant will be constructed in Tijuana to provide a higher level of treatment for SBIWTP effluent and to treat an additional volume of raw sewage from the Tijuana region.

Carlos Marin, Acting U.S. Commissioner, explained that the project offers major benefits on both sides of the border. "Because Mexico and the United States share common geography in the Tijuana River basin, an international initiative was needed to address the challenges facing all those who live and work near the border," he said. "This project will have a direct positive environmental and economic impact throughout the San Diego and Tijuana area."

Mexican Section Commissioner Arturo Herrera hailed the issuance of the RFQ. "This milestone is good news for Tijuana and all people of the state of Baja California," he said. "We have worked hard for several years in planning this project to address the deficiencies of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Minute 311 Sanitation Project will meet this need, treat

the growing volume of our wastewater and create the opportunity to reclaim water that is so needed in this region. Now, action begins.”

Herrera said that Mexico will announce the location of the new plant in the near future, explaining that the site will be in a location which will allow reclaimed water supplies to be retained for use in Mexico. The facility will be known as Minute 311 Sanitation Project to reflect the authorizing IBWC Minute 311, he added.

Wastewater treatment will be provided under a Bajagua fee-for-services contract with the U.S. Government. Bajagua, LLC is responsible for financing and developing the project as well as providing wastewater treatment services. Bajagua will provide the financing to pay the design-build-operate (DBO) contractor selected under the IBWC framework. Payments of the U.S. Government for services performed by Bajagua, which are subject to the availability of appropriated funds by the U.S. Congress, will begin only after the treatment facilities have been built and the treated effluent is certified to meet all applicable Mexico, U.S., and State of California clean water standards.

The RFQ is available by contacting Mr. Albert Rechany, Director of Operations, Bajagua, LLC, via e-mail at rfq@bajagua.com or by telephone at (619) 417-0110. Statements of Qualification from interested firms meeting the requirements of the RFQ must be submitted no later than 3 p.m., January 8, 2007.

The RFQ is the first of a two-step process to select the DBO contractor. With the approval of the IBWC and its group of advisors, the Binational Technical Committee, Bajagua plans to short-list the three most qualified firms, issue a Request for Proposal in early 2007, and award a contract by May 2007. The schedule provides that operations of the project will begin by September 30, 2008.

For more information:

Sally Spener
915-832-4175
sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov